

Message Text

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SUBJECT: CUT-BACK IN TRADE CENTER EVENT SCHEDULE

REF: (A) USDOC 22L8 (B) USDOC 3390 (C) LONDON 98L

L. REDUCTION OF TRADE CENTER ACTIVITIES BY TWO MAJOR EXHIBITIONS ANNUALLY UNWELCOME DEVELOPMENT AND REPRESENTS RETREAT FROM PROCLAIMED AIM OF TRADE CENTER PROGRAM OF INTRODUCING NEW AMERICAN FIRMS TO EXPORT. CUT-BACK IN SHOWS AND BSP REPLACEMENT DOES NOT FURTHER THIS AIM AND CANNOT HELP BUT MAKE TRADE CENTER PROGRAM EVEN MORE VULNERABLE TO CHARGES OF MERELY SUBSIDIZED SERVICE TO LARGE MULTI-NATIONAL AMERICAN FIRMS ALREADY ESTABLISHED ABROAD AND NEGLECTING INTERESTS OF SMALL AND MEDIUM U.S. EXPORTERS. IT SHOULD BE CLEAR TO ALL THAT MULTI-FIRM BSPS CAN IN NO WAY BE SAID TO FULFIL THE AIMS OF OUR EXPORT PROMOTION.

2. IN ADDITION TO OUR FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM WITH THIS DECISION, WE FORESEE REAL OPERATIONAL DIFFICULTIES WITH THE MULTI-COMPANY BSP PROPOSALS, NOT LEAST OF WHICH ARE NEW DEMANDS WHICH WILL BE MADE ON TRADE CENTER RESOURCES. THESE HAVE ALREADY BEEN STRAINED AS A RESULT OF HAVING TO TAKE OVER MUCH OF USDOC RESPONSIBILITIES IN RECRUITING EXHIBITORS FOR MAJOR SHOWS. IN ADDITION, RECENT
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PROPOSED BUDGET REDUCTIONS FOR FY '78 WILL LOWER TRADE CENTER'S RESOURCES AND MAKE IT ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO SUSTAIN THE REQUIRED HEAVY RECRUITING ACTIVITY. AT SAME TIME ESTABLISHMENT OF MULTI-BSP FEE IS DIFFICULT SINCE NO ASSURANCE OF ULTIMATE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS POSSIBLE.

3. MAIN PROBLEM HOWEVER, IS THAT THE CRITERIA FOR SELECTING BSP THEMES MUST NECESSARILY BE RELATED TO THE SIZE OF THE RESIDENT AMERICAN AGENT/DISTRIBUTOR POPULATION IN ANY GIVEN FIELD. WE BECOME LESS INTERESTED IN WHAT WILL SELL WELL HERE AND MORE INTERESTED IN HOW MANY FIRMS ARE AVAILABLE AND WILLING TO FACTOR THE TRADE CENTER BSP INTO THEIR MARKETING STRATEGY FOR THE U.K. EXERCISE BECOMES ONE OF GENERATING FULL UTILIZATION OF TRADE CENTERS - AN OPERATION WHICH CAN BE DONE MORE EFFECTIVELY ON AN INDIVIDUAL RATHER THAN MULTIPLE BSP BASIS.

4. GARNITZ MEMO OF APRIL 26, 1977 ESTABLISHED A REQUIREMENT FOR USDOC PRIOR APPROVAL OF MULTI-FIRMS BSP OF MORE THAN 10 EXHIBITORS. ASSUME THAT REQUEST FOR BSP THEME RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN REFTEL MEANS USDOC INTENDS MAINTAIN THIS CONTROL. THIS WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT. WE WILL FIND IT HARD TO IDENTIFY FIRMLY BSP THEMES WITHOUT CARRYING OUT EXTENSIVE POLLING ACTIVITIES. WE WILL FIND IT EQUALLY DIFFICULT TO CONFIRM PARTICIPATION WITH RESIDENT AGENTS/DISTRIBUTORS IN TRADE CENTER SHOWS WHICH MAY BE SCHEDULED AS MUCH AS A YEAR AND HALF FROM NOW. FINALLY WE CANNOT EXPECT LOCAL AGENTS/DISTRIBUTORS TO ADJUST THEIR MARKETING PLANS TO SUPPORT BSPTS THAT WILL NOT CONFLICT IN TIME AND THEME WITH BSPTS IN OTHER EUROPEAN TRADE CENTERS. TO FURTHER EASE THIS PROBLEM CONSIDERATION MIGHT BE GIVEN TO HAVING USDOC ABSTAIN ENTIRELY FROM RECRUITING IN COMPUTER-RELATED OR SOME OTHER EQUALLY "SHOWABLE" UNCLASSIFIED

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COMMODITY AREA AND LEAVE THEME EXCLUSIVELY FOR OVERSEAS RECRUITED MULTI-SHOW BSPTS. AS EMBASSY AND TRADE CENTER WILL BE FULLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL PHASES OF BSPTS FROM THEME IDENTIFICATION AND RECRUITMENT THROUGH TO FINAL CONSUMPTION, WE SHOULD HAVE MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY IN PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND CANNOT RUSH INTO UNREALISTICALLY PREMATURE AND BINDING PROGRAM COMMITMENTS.

5. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE PROPOSE TO START AN ORDERLY POLLING PROCESS AND WILL BE TRANSMITTING SEVERAL SUGGESTED THEMES FOR FY '78 BSPTS IN DUE COURSE. WE WILL NOT WANT TO COMMIT OURSELVES FIRMLY TO ANY OF THESE AT THIS TIME - UNLESS OF COURSE WE RECEIVE AN OVERWHELMING RESIDENT COMPANY RESPONSE. WE WILL ALSO MAINTAIN CONSTANT DIALOGUE WITH COMMERCE ON TIMING AND THEMES THROUGHOUT COMING YEAR. SPIERS

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